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### Part II.—NATURAL SCIENCE.

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I.—*On certain Spiders which mimic Ants.*—By SURGEON J. H. TULL  
WALSH, I. M. S.

[Received 25th February; read 4th March.]

Whoever has studied the structure and habits of the various genera of the *Formicidæ* must have been struck by the "fitness" which these little creatures possess for "the struggle for existence." Even in those individuals with a rudimentary and useless sting there are still the powerful biting mandibles, the acid poison which can be ejected, often to a considerable distance, on to the enemy and various protective odours, such as those secreted by the anal glands of most of the *Dolichoderidæ*. The pangolin and other ant-eaters certainly cause havoc among the ants who make their dwellings in the ground, but smaller animals and birds cannot attack ants with impunity, and it is noticeable that the ants most frequently mimicked live and feed on trees. Such being the case the ant is well protected, and any other creature that, by an accident of natural selection, resembled an ant in form and colour would have obtained an advantage through this resemblance, all unconscious as regards the individual but conscious, if one may use such an expression, in relation to the orderly complexity of nature. The advantageous resemblance would, according to generally accepted laws, be transmitted and strengthened until the mimic reaped the full benefit accruing from its likeness to the ants among which it lived. Such instances of mimicry are seen among a certain sub-family of spiders,

the *Attidæ*. These spiders, ant-like in form, and partially ant-like in habit, do not spin webs for the purpose of catching prey, but, wandering about in company with the ants they resemble, spring upon their victims from behind, (hence called by some Entomologists *Saltigradæ*). Their home is generally fixed to the under surface of a leaf and consists of a small oval, whitish, silky nest just big enough to accommodate the spider. Attention has been drawn to the presence of these spiders in America\* and Africa†; Mr. Wood-Mason collected two or three specimens in Assam some years ago and Mr. Rothney‡ notes the occurrence of a *Salticus* in company with *Sima rufo-nigra* in the neighbourhood of Barrackpur. I have found these spider mimics in Orissa, and also in and near Calcutta, and have, during the last eighteen months, collected or acquired some eight or ten species or varieties belonging to genera of the sub-family *Attidæ*. With one or two exceptions all these spiders were found hunting with the ants they so closely resemble. The two most common are a variety of *Salticus formicarius* Linn. which mimics *Sima rufo-nigra* Jerd. and a pretty *Salticus* (sp.?) which may be found in company with *Ocophylla smaragdina* Fabr. whose nests are extremely common on the trees in the Royal Botanic Gardens at Sibpur.

The resemblance in form and colour is so great that collectors have been deceived, and indeed except with a lens it is difficult often to say which is the ant and which is the spider; but at the same time it must be remembered that the likeness is greater when both are alive and moving than when the dead spider is compared with the dead ant. While the body in most sub-families of spiders is short and rounded with a constriction only between the cephalothorax and the abdomen, the mimic has a long thin body like that of an ant. There is a partial constriction marking off the cephalic from the thoracic portion of the cephalothorax, and that part of the spider's body which joins the cephalothorax to the abdomen is drawn out into a pedicel having on its upper surface nodes mimicking closely those on a ant's pedicel. The colouring of the spider is also a more or less correct imitation of that of the ant. A superficial resemblance could hardly go farther, but there is a still more wonderful point to notice. The spider has four pair of legs and no antennæ; the ant has three pair of legs and a pair of long an-

\* Bates, Trans. Linn. Soc. Vol. XXIII.

Belt "Naturalist in Nicaragua," p. 314.

Peckham "Protective Resemblances in Spiders." I have not been able to read this in the original and know of it only from references found in Poulton's "The Colours of Animals."

† J. P. Mansel Weale Nature Vol. iii. p. 508.

‡ Jour. Bomb. Nat. Hist. Soc. Vol. V, p. 44.

tennæ which are generally kept in motion as the little animal runs along. In adapting themselves to circumstances, the spiders have learned to use their first pair of legs to represent antennæ. In all the cases that I have noticed, the spider when moving holds its first pair of legs aloft to simulate antennæ, and certainly in the case of a *Salticus* (sp. ?) which mimics *Camponotus micans* Mayr these legs are kept in continual motion. On one of the bottles presented to me by Mr. J. Wood-Mason I find the following note made at the time the spiders were captured :—

“(Cachar, J. W.-M.) smaller one mimics and runs about with a little brown ant carrying its palpi like the open mandibles of the ants, and its first pair of legs off the ground and elbowed, as the ants do their antennæ.”

This note draws attention to another curious resemblance which is produced by the flattening of the terminal joint of the palpi. In the spider found by Mr. Wood-Mason and in several other species, this formation occurs and the falces, which are small, are partly hidden by the palpi. In other species and notably in *Salticus formicarius* the palpi are small and the resemblance to mandibles is produced by the large flattened first joint of the falces ; thus the same end, as far as the resulting mimicry is concerned, is attained by two very different morphological variations. Belt (*l. c.*) notices the fact that in the Nicaraguan species the fore-legs are raised from the ground and J. P. Mansel Weale (*l. c.*) makes some interesting remarks which I will quote. He says :—

“The most perfect cases of mimicry I know of are two spiders (specific nature unknown to me) which have the closest resemblance to ants. They belong to the *Salticidæ* and are apparently related to *Salticus formicarius*. The one is smooth black and shining and runs rapidly on the ground and bark of trees, and resembles the ant which builds its nest in *Acacia horrida* and is used by the Kafirs for the purposes of torture. The other is larger and has its cephalothorax dull black and its abdomen covered with short yellowish hairs. It is generally found running on the stems of herbaceous plants and small bushes and closely resembles an ant found in similar situations. The fore-legs in both species are larger than the second pair are frequently held up when they closely resemble the antennæ of ants.”

As a general rule therefore most observers agree that the first pair of legs is used to simulate antennæ, but an exception must be noted. E. G. Peckham (*l. c.*) records that an American species *Synageles picata* “holds up its second pair of legs to represent antennæ.” This peculiarity of habit has apparently produced or been produced by a change in the relative length of the legs in this species. The general

formula for the *Attidae* seems to be 4, 1, 3, 2; the fourth pair of legs being the longest and the second pair the shortest. In *Synageles picata* the formula, to judge from a figure (*l. c.*), is 4, 2, 3, 1. *Synemosyna fornicata*, another American spider observed by Peckham, has the usual formula, but is said to use its second pair of legs as antennæ!

I have mentioned that the spiders are probably protected from birds and other enemies by their resemblance to ants, but there can be no doubt that frequently they also thereby gain another very considerable advantage. The ants with which these spiders "most do congregate" are fairly omnivorous feeders, but shew a decided preference for sweet juices often to be found exuding from trees, fruit or flowers. To these juices come also flies, small beetles and other insects which form the natural prey of the spider, and which do not, under the circumstances, particularly fear the ants. Thus while the flies are sucking up sweetness in company with the ants, the spider is no doubt able, under cover of his disguise, to approach near enough to make a spring upon his unsuspecting victim and fix his sharp falcēs into its body. As regards the ants themselves, they do not seem to take any particular notice of the spiders, and do not apparently attack them. One spider, a mimic of *Ocophylla smaragdina* was found by me in a nest of these ants with its little silky shelter attached to one of the leaves which formed part of the abode of probably the most fierce of all the ants found in Bengal. It may also be supposed that the spider does not attack or annoy the ants.

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II.—*A List of the Butterflies of Engano, with some Remarks on the Danaidæ.*—By WILLIAM DOHERTY, *Cincinnati, U. S. A.* Communicated by the NATURAL HISTORY SECRETARY.

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(With Plate I, figs. 1—4.)

The long parallel lines of upheaval which characterize Burma are continued far into the Malayan region in the form of three great chains of islands and mountains. The most eastern of these, and the oldest, being chiefly composed of primitive rocks, consists of the Malay Peninsula, itself built up of several parallel ranges, the Riouw and Lingga groups, Banka and Billiton. The most western includes the Audamans and Nicobars, and the line of islands which may be called the Nias group, lying west of Sumatra, extending perhaps to western Java. Between these two the large island of Sumatra has been formed, probably in times geologically recent. No doubt some parts of Sumatra are composed of older rocks, but till the great volcanic up-